

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, there are many heroes from Colorado who have fought and continue to fight in the global war on terror. Today I rise to pay tribute to one hero in particular, Army Sergeant Sean Durkin of Aurora, Colorado.

On March 27, 2010, Sergeant Sean Durkin and his fellow soldiers were on a mission near Forward Operating Base Wilson in Afghanistan when their convoy was struck by an explosive device. Sergeant Sean Durkin and two other brave soldiers exited the vehicle to respond to the blast but were all injured when a second improvised explosive device went off. Sergeant Sean Durkin was gravely wounded and ultimately succumbed to his injuries while at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

In 2004, Sergeant Sean Durkin graduated from Eaglecrest High School in Colorado. Sergeant Sean Durkin is a shining example of Army service and sacrifice. As a former member of the Army and as a retired Marine officer, my deepest sympathies go out to his family and to all who knew him.

GOLDMAN SACHS AND BAD BETS

(Mr. WELCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, last week we saw two stories about Goldman Sachs. It made record profits of \$1 billion a month for the past 3 months and it was sued for civil fraud by the Securities and Exchange Commission for the manner in which it made that money misleading its own clients.

Goldman has transformed itself from one of the most respected institutions on Wall Street to one of the most reviled for putting itself ahead of its clients and the American people. The \$1 billion designed-to-fail Abacus deal for the benefit of a hedge fund billionaire who needed to get richer did not create a single new job in America. It did not provide a single American family with a new mortgage. It didn't help a single new business get started. It did more to damage the economy than it could possibly have done to have helped it.

But the only difference with this Texas Hold'em new poker game that Goldman fuels is that when Goldman makes a bad bet the American taxpayer is the loser.

JUDGE REJECTS FIRST AMENDMENT

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Federal Judge Barbara Crabb sided with some atheists last week and wrongly ruled the National Day of Prayer is unconstitutional.

The first amendment to the Constitution states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise

thereof." The judge obviously forgot the "free exercise" part.

Our Founding Fathers jealously guarded the right to free exercise of religious conscience. Thanksgiving was started in 1789 by President George Washington so the Nation could, "Thank and pray to the Almighty for blessing America." We start each day of Congress with a prayer. Heaven knows we need it. We have a long history of honoring the religious foundation of America's liberty.

The National Day of Prayer does not seek to establish a government religion. Quite to the contrary, we specifically recognize one day each year the right of Americans to freely exercise their religion, free from anyone's interference, including atheists and Federal judges.

What's next, Judge Crabb? You going to ban Thanksgiving and Christmas as national holidays?

And that's just the way it is.

EARTH DAY

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the last 40 years of Earth Day represent some of my personal highest hopes, fondest dreams, and greatest frustrations about the environment. At times we have watched retreat, denial, and in some cases destruction. But we have also seen people mobilized and government respond with groundbreaking legislation.

Today, Earth Day is not so much an issue of hope or despair as one of determination. The current path we are on is not sustainable. It's, indeed, destructive. More and more people know the devastating facts. But what is exciting is that we know what to do about it. From Girl Scout troops to community colleges to the United States military, people are moving in the right direction with solutions that are cost-effective and that most agree we should implement even if we aren't concerned about destabilizing the Earth's climate.

The Big question is, Where will we be on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day? Will we have risen to the challenge of global pollution, leading by example, making real progress to a low carbon future while we revitalize American industry to compete for business at home and abroad? We can, and I hope that we will.

ENERGY AND THE FARM BILL

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. The Third District of Nebraska is one of the largest agricultural districts in the country and is home to more than 30,000 farmers and ranchers. Yesterday, the House Ag Committee took the first

step on the road leading to a new Farm Bill.

Taking a comprehensive look at the agriculture sector requires us to be direct about the impact of policies coming from Washington to those 30,000 Nebraskans and agriculture producers throughout the country. Measures like the House-passed cap-and-trade bill will have dire consequences for agriculture. As higher energy prices hit other areas of our economy, farmers and ranchers will pay more for seed, fertilizer, equipment, energy, and other supplies.

My goal is to create policies which will strengthen U.S. agriculture and provide long-term stability for our Nation's producers who feed America and the world. We must not continue to saddle producers with onerous regulations which stand in the way of growth and only lead to more uncertainty.

LETTER TO THE SEC RE: GOLDMAN SACHS AND AIG

(Mr. CUMMINGS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask the Securities and Exchange Commission to do their job. The letter Mr. DEFAZIO and I wrote to the SEC asks for nothing more and nothing less. The SEC has sued Goldman Sachs for potential fraud. Rather than jumping to the conclusion that there was no fraud or simply convicting Goldman Sachs in the court of public opinion, Mr. DEFAZIO and our 36 cosigners and I call for an expanded investigation by the SEC. Should fraud be found, we ask that any taxpayer money paid by AIG and obtained through fraudulent transactions be recovered.

Finally, we are asking that evidence of criminal wrongdoing be turned over to the Justice Department. The SEC must be serious about reining in companies who ignore our laws. I am committed to this cause, Mr. DEFAZIO is committed to this cause, and our 36 cosponsors are committed to this cause.

I invite all of my colleagues to sign onto the letter and join us.

ELIMINATE SWEETHEART DEALS

(Mr. BUCHANAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I introduced a bill that would eliminate sweetheart deals. Recently, the current health care bill that got passed, I know in my area, in my town hall meetings, talking to a lot of Americans, people are concerned about the health care bill that just passed, but they are outraged about the sweetheart deals.

What do I mean? The \$300 million that went to the Louisiana purchase, \$100 million that went to a hospital in Connecticut. People are outraged because they feel it is their money, it is their taxpayer money, and they are very concerned about it. They feel it is buying votes.